DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 6, 2012 PSA #12-02 CONTACT: Heather Cockerill, MPH, CHES Program Coordinator (909) 383-6365

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

San Bernardino: February 7th marks the 12th year for the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. In 2000, National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day was founded as a grass roots movement to promote HIV testing and treatment targeting African Americans.

The focal points for the National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day are: **Education** – increasing awareness among African Americans about the HIV services available in their community; **Testing** – encouraging African Americans to set February 7th of each year to be tested for HIV; **Involvement** – motivating African Americans to get involved in HIV prevention, care and treatment services and advisory bodies; and **Treatment** – connecting or re-connecting African Americans living with HIV/AIDS to a system of care.

African Americans are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that 1.2 million people in the United States are living with HIV; with 50,000 new HIV infections occurring each year. Approximately 14% of the United States population is represented by African Americans; yet, this group comprised 44% of the new HIV infections reported in 2009

In San Bernardino County, the percentage of African Americans in the general population is 8%; yet, African Americans account for almost 28% of the HIV/AIDS cases in the County. Among those individuals with an "unmet need" in the County, meaning they are aware of their HIV status but are not receiving care for HIV, 29% are African Americans. This highlights the need for a community approach for outreach, prevention and linkage to care services.

In observance of the day, the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health HIV Prevention and Care Program is hosting a FREE community testing event at:

California State University San Bernardino 5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407 Student Health Center Tuesday February 7, 2012 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Free HIV testing services and an informational booth will be available to the public. For more information about the event call (909) 537-5241. For additional information about HIV testing, hours of service or other Public Health services, contact the San Bernardino County HIV Prevention and Care Section at (909) 388-0400 or 1-800-255-6560 or visit our website at www.sbcounty.gov/dph.

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